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Supreme Court Rules Attorney Should be Disbarred for Attempted Tax Evasion

OLYMPIA – Feb. 11, 2010 – Attorney Stephen D. Cramer should be disbarred for “dishonest, illegal and deceitful” conduct related to an attempt to avoid paying state taxes, the Washington State Supreme Court ruled today.

The court agreed with the recommendation by a hearing officer of the Washington State Bar Association that the Federal Way lawyer be disbarred for continuing to operate his business after the Department of Revenue had revoked his business license.

The Department had filed tax warrants totaling nearly \$10,000 against the business in 2008 after Cramer stopped filing tax returns. It subsequently revoked his business license, but Cramer attempted to evade paying the back taxes by continuing to practice law without registering with the Department.

Cramer told the Department he was shutting down his business, but in fact continued to operate it under a new corporation. He also took down a revocation notice posted at his practice in violation of state law.

The Department took action when it learned that the attorney had formed the new corporation and had transferred all the assets to that corporation but none of the liabilities.

The court decision is available at

<http://www.courts.wa.gov/opinions/?fa=opinions.disp&filename=2006744MAJ>.

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